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IN THE SPECIFICATION

14 Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 20, and ending on page 14, line 4, with the following amended paragraph.

12.26.06

In the practice of the invention, a so-called shutdown separator is preferably used as the separator. The use of a shutdown separator has the advantage that as the interior temperature of an electrochemical device rises, micropores in the separator close for inhibiting conduction of ions, restraining current flow and preventing thermal runaway. Suitable shutdown separators include separators in the form of microporous synthetic resin film containing at least one of low-density polyethylene (LDPE), linear low-density polyethylene (LLDPE), and high-density polyethylene (HDPE) as described in Japanese Patent No. 2,642,206; and a separator for lithium batteries which is prepared by the method of preparing a separator for lithium batteries in the form of microporous film described in Japanese Patent No. 2,520,316, the microporous film being made from a polyethylene composition containing at least 1 wt% of an ultra-high-molecular-weight polyethylene with a weight average molecular weight of at least 7×10^5 and having a weight average molecular weight/number average molecular weight of 10 to 300, the microporous film having a thickness of 0.1-25 μm , a porosity of 40-95%, an average through-pore diameter of 0.001-0.1 μm , and a breaking strength of at least 0.5 kg/10 mm wide, said method comprising the steps of dissolving the polyethylene composition in a non-volatile solvent of an aliphatic hydrocarbon, cyclic hydrocarbon or mineral oil fraction, while heating, to form a uniform solution, extruding the solution through a die to form a gel sheet, removing the non-volatile solvent, and thereafter, orienting the sheet in at least one axial direction and by a fold of at least 2.